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It is thought that the souls of such persons reside in their memorial stones. The suppliant approaches the stone and slaps it several times with his open hand, to awaken the spirit. If he does this properly, his request is sure to be granted. He then says: "Listen, listen, so-and-so. I am going on a journey [giving details of his route, etc.]. If I come back safe and the trip is a success, I will bring here and sacrifice to you so much honey [or snuff, rum, etc.]." When the prayer has been granted, the vower makes the offering himself, with no ceremony except a second awakening of the spirit and a brief announcement. 782 769

OMBIASY

The term *ombiasy* signifies a medicine-man or magician. The Menabe recognize two main classes, *ombiasy manangatra* and *ombiasy mpsikidy*. The latter are divided into *ombiasy ndolo* and *ombiasy nkazo*. All the types of *ombiasy* include both men and women. Men are more numerous, but some of the most famous are women. 756 791

The *ombiasy manangatra* are spiritualist mediums. They are usually marked by some slight mental or nervous abnormality. No special training is required and they begin practicing as soon as they become conscious of their powers. Their main activity is the discovery of the cause of illness and the means for curing it. Informants thought that they might be appealed to in other matters, but could give no instances. 756

Seances are held in the *ombiasy's* house, always at night. The *ombiasy* spreads a mat in the northeast corner of the house, placing on it a bottle of rum and certain charms. He sits beside it or lies on it. Sometimes both *ombiasy* and mat are covered with a tent-like mosquito net of raffia cloth. This tent is about 5 feet high and comes down to the floor, giving complete concealment. The sick person and his relatives seat themselves on the floor, apparently without any fixed order, and the fire and all lights are extinguished. The people begin clapping and singing softly. After a time a knocking is heard on the walls, or voices are heard repeating: "We have come. We have come." There are sometimes as many as ten or twelve spirits, distinguishable by their different voices. The voices are nasal and seem to come from the east or west of the *ombiasy*, sometimes high, sometimes low, but never far from him. The head of the family, or the sick person, then tells the spirits why they have been called. After this the *ombiasy* explains the situation fully and 755 787

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must observe. If the patient dies, the *ombiasy* does not receive the final fee, but he retains the initial fee and is not punished, except by loss of prestige. In case of an epidemic the *ombiasy* gives protective medicine to everyone in the village. 755

As a rule the *ombiasy* is only applied to in serious cases. In every village there are old people of both sexes who treat minor ailments without any pretensions to magic. These practitioners use herb remedies, for the most part, and some of their medicines possess real value. Inflammation is relieved by cupping. The operator makes a small incision in the skin, places the tip of a horn over it, and exhausts the air by suction. The small end of the horn is covered with a lump of soft wax and when the vacuum has been formed this is pressed together with the tongue, sealing the opening (Fig. 23, h). The horn is left on until the suction has filled it with blood. Boils and abscesses are never lanced, but may be poulticed to bring them to a head. Fractures are treated by the *ombiasy* or by persons having a special charm for the purpose. In some cases the art seems to be hereditary in families. A decoction is made by boiling the leaves of various plants in water, or they are pounded and mixed with grease, and the limb is rubbed with this. The bone is set and the limb placed in leaves with a heavy bandage. No splints are used. 757 !

SLEIGHT OF HAND

The Tanala *ombiasy* make comparatively little use of sleight of hand. The idea that illness is due to some foreign body which has been thrown into the afflicted person seems to be lacking, so there is little reason to exercise it. However, some practitioners use sleight of hand to show their powers and impress their clientele. A Tanala *ombiasy* resident among the Betsileo staged an exhibition for me as follows: He spread a new mat on the floor and placed upon it two large bowls, one empty, the other filled with water. Beside these he laid a club made from half of a sawfish's saw. This, he said, was a sort of magician's wand. Anyone struck by it would die. For the exhibition, it simply increased the power of the other charms. When these objects had been arranged, he drew from his waistcloth a charm made from sticks of wood packed into the hollow of a small horn. He placed this, large end down, in the dish of water and allowed it to steep for about ten minutes. He then removed it and placed it in the dry bowl. After this, he asked me to give him something that he could chew up and swallow. I offered him a piece of ordinary paper about three inches square. He steeped this in the water for a short time, then folded it and pressed it to the 789 [753] 756

! [See category 116, p. 205 - analyst]

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789 open end of the charm, immersing both in the water. He repeated
756 this several times, asking me to examine it each time to be sure that he had not made a substitution. Then he swallowed the paper and drank most of the water, at least a quart and a pint. After this he rested for a moment, belched, and spat out a wad of thread. He told me to pick this up and draw on it. The thread ran down his throat and after pulling out about 15 feet of it I cut it off with a knife. The thread was ordinary commercial cotton. He had evidently swallowed a ball of it, holding the upper end in his mouth in some way.

After a short rest he asked me to get him a piece of glass and I gave him a fragment of broken bottle about 1½ inches long by ¾ inch wide. He treated this as he had the paper, then put it in his mouth and chewed up about half of it, swallowing it. There was no trickery in this part of the performance. He then drank more water from the bowl, which had been refilled, and asked that the dry bowl be held in front of him. After a short time he began to retch and spat into the bowl a double handful of dark blue berries about the size of huckleberries.

Following another rest he took a second piece of paper, went through the same performance as before, and spat out a live chameleon 7¼ inches long. I caught the animal, which was very active, and found slight bruises on either side of its neck, probably due to its having been held between his teeth.

Lastly, he took another piece of paper, repeated the performance, and spat out a live snake 16 inches long. This completed the show. The various objects produced must, of course, have been slipped into his mouth each time, but this was done very cleverly. He talked almost constantly and although I watched him closely I was unable to see when he made the transfer. His native audience was much impressed and seemed to believe that the transformations were authentic.

SORCERY

754 The Tanala Menabe seem to lack the almost hysterical fear of sorcery which characterizes the tribes of the east coast and plateau. They admit that a certain amount of it goes on, but trials for sorcery are rare and few stories about it are current. Sickness and ill fortune are usually ascribed to the malevolence of ghosts rather than men. All but one of my informants denied any first hand knowledge of the sorcerer's methods and none of them believed that they themselves had been the victims of sorcery.

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at once. The Zafindiamanana have no charms to prevent possession and say that no permanent cure is possible. 158 787

The *salamanga sakalava* is always possessed by a known ancestral spirit. In many cases he is a regular practitioner who can throw himself into the *salamanga* state at will. The Zafindiamanana seem to use the terms *salamanga sakalava* and *ombiasy ndolo* as synonymous, although in other gentes the latter term has a different significance (see *Ombiasy*). However, they rate such persons below the regular *ombiasy* and say that the profession is dangerous, often leading to insanity. 756 829

The *salamanga sakalava* seems to occupy himself mainly with curing diseases. The situation is explained to him before the seizure comes on. During the attack he behaves like the ordinary *salamanga*, but if he runs to water at the onset of the possession he will dive to the bottom and bring up something from it. This will be the medicine for the malady. After he has been brought back, and while he is dancing, his spirit will answer questions or declare the cause and cure of the sickness. Finally, he is cured with *hazomanga* water, like the regular *salamanga*. 756

Among the Manandriana the ideas and practices connected with the *salamanga* are much more elaborate. They call the ordinary *salamanga* (without messages) *bilo*. It manifests itself by violent twitchings and a compulsion to dance. It may attack people while they are asleep or seriously ill in bed. It may also be brought on by eating the first of the new rice or maize at harvest time. Sometimes, apparently, the *ombiasy* diagnoses an illness as *bilo* when the ordinary symptoms are lacking. When the attack commences the *ombiasy* ("medicine-man") employs the *sikidy* ("divination") to discover what sort it is. There are three varieties, *andiha*, *andamalama* and *evobola*, which are the same in symptoms but differ in treatment. Apparently the real difference lies in the strength and obstinacy of the possessing spirit, but Raindranaivo remarked cynically that rich people were usually possessed by the *andiha*, which required the longest and most expensive ceremony. 753 755

The cure of *salamanga andiha* is as follows: A bed in the form of a stretcher is hung from the roof of the house in such a position that its edge will be against the north side of the center post and its head east. Directly over the ordinary fireplace another fireplace is made. This is a platform raised on four posts about 2 feet high and covered with a mat. On the mat is a square enclosure of boards full of earth in which stone tripods for two pots are planted. One tripod 755

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nemy. When they had this information they divided the men into several sections, each under the command of a *fanalolahy*. In order to be recognized the soldiers wore a *felana* [disk of white shell] on the forehead or hair. About 2 A.M. the army took the road again to surround the village and attack it. The king and his company remained at the camp. The signal for assault was a volley fired into the village. The people in the village seized their arms and hurried to the defense. The battle began, the people fighting with spears and axes. If the defenders were defeated they took to flight. All the enemy men captured were killed on the spot; only women and children were taken as slaves. As for the enemy king, even if the village was taken he never left his house. He put his weapons beside him and sat at the eastern door waiting to go out. If he had the bad luck to fall into the hands of the *anakoa*, brothers of the hostile king, he was killed on the spot, but if he was captured by a commoner, he was saved. The soldier lifted the enemy king on his shoulders and bore him out of the village to help his escape. After looting, the village was burned and the *ompiady* [combatants] went back to their camp with the booty. After complimenting the army and the soldier who had saved the enemy king, the king gave the order to retire. When he arrived at his own village the booty was divided. The king received the largest share, then the *fanalolahy*, then the ordinary soldiers. If there were prisoners the king always kept his share and employed them in his service. Those falling to the *fanalolahy* and soldiers were usually sold or exchanged for cattle. The proceeds were divided among them. After the war the relatives of the prisoners sent their king to buy them back. The king liberated them for from ten to fifteen cattle each. If they were not ransomed, they were sold to the east coast tribes for guns and powder." These tribes sold them in turn to European and Arab slave traders.

It has seemed best to give this account in full, but a few comments are necessary. The *fanalolahy* were simply warriors who had distinguished themselves in previous expeditions. The rank was conferred by general consent and not as a reward for any specific act of bravery or even for length of service. Although they acted as officers or leaders in action, their powers over the other soldiers were very indefinite and there was nothing like military discipline. The *ombiasy* ("medicine-man") certainly played a much more important part in the expedition than has been ascribed to him, but the extent of his activity is uncertain. Among the Menabe, as will be shown presently, he was practically the leader. The peculiar